

STATE-BY-STATE

News from across the USA

ALABAMA Selma: A fifth and final gas light commemorating the state's civil rights history will be unveiled Thursday in Selma. Lights already have been dedicated in Birmingham, Tuscaloosa, Montgomery and Anniston. The gas light in Selma will be at the entrance to Riverwalk Park, a few blocks from the Edmund Pettus Bridge, where voting-rights marchers were attacked by state troopers on "Bloody Sunday," March 7, 1965.

ALASKA Kodiak: Blockbuster is closing its only location in the city, manager Lyle Phillips said. The closure will leave two locations that rent movies in Kodiak: Safeway and AC Express.

ARIZONA Phoenix: A family of seven escaped their burning home after they were alerted by a family dog. The Fire Department said the dog alerted the family at the same time Thursday morning as a passerby called 911 after seeing smoke from the fire in the attic coming through the roof. All seven people escaped.

ARKANSAS Hot Springs: Officials said the annual winter drawdowns at Lakes Hamilton and Catherine in Hot Springs are to begin Nov. 2. Lake levels will be reduced by about 6 inches per day through Nov. 10. The water released at the dams will be used to generate hydroelectric power.

CALIFORNIA Los Angeles: Robert R. Taylor, who took soap out of dishes, put it in pump bottles, has died at age 77. The creator of SoftSoap, which was introduced in 1980, also developed the hugely successful Calvin Klein fragrance line Obsession.

HIGHLIGHT: TEXAS

Rejuvenated Galveston 'a better place'

The Associated Press

GALVESTON Like many communities along the Gulf Coast five years ago, Galveston suffered the wrath of Hurricane Ike, which became the state's costliest natural disaster.

A storm surge as high as 20 feet and winds of up to 110 mph damaged 80% of the island city's homes, flooded its historic downtown district and washed away much of its beaches, an important part of Galveston's tourism-based economy.

Five years later, tourism and economic development levels are higher than before Ike as beaches have been replenished and homes, businesses and other structures have been repaired.

Though construction projects still dot the landscape and the city's population is down nearly 11,000 residents, Galveston leaders and residents said Thursday that they believe their city has rebounded well. Others in the area echoed those sentiments, saying that despite the ongoing rebuilding, their communities are in pretty good shape.

"I think Galveston was wonderful before Ike, but I think everyone is pulling together to make it a better place," Mayor Lewis Rosen said.

Ike made landfall near Galveston — about 50 miles southeast of Houston — early Sept. 13, 2008.

The storm caused more than \$29 billion in damage and was responsible for more than 100 deaths, in-



PAT SULLIVAN, AP

A surfer heads into the water Wednesday near the Galveston Island Historic Pleasure Pier in Galveston, Texas.

cluding 12 in Galveston and Chambers Counties.

One of every three jobs in Galveston is tied to tourism, and officials attribute the city's recovery in part to repairing hotels, restaurants and tourism infrastructure and investing more than \$125 million in new attractions.

Last year was the city's best tourism season on record, with 5.7 million visitors.

"Tourism is one of the biggest reasons Galveston has recovered so quickly," said Meg Winchester, di-

rector of Galveston's convention and visitors bureau.

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dents this year creates a hostile learning environment for sexual assault victims. Juniors and seniors gather to demand freshmen offer up "libations" for the "gods."

PENNSYLVANIA Pittsburgh: Some are being ticketed for parking in their own driveways under an obscure ordinance that requires them to pay \$225 for a permit if they wish to park within 30 feet of a street. City Council members said they've been getting complaints about the tickets which are issued by the city's Bureau of Building Inspection.

RHODE ISLAND Coventry: A developmentally disabled 17-year-old girl from Massachusetts who was last seen leaving a library with a man her parents said she met online has been found safe here. Police said Brittany Thompson was located "safe and unharmed" walking down a street on Thursday.



SOUTH CAROLINA Myrtle Beach: A liger named Hercules weighing 922 pounds and living at the Myrtle Beach Safari wildlife preserve is the largest cat in the world, according to Guinness World Records. A liger is a cross between a lion and a tiger. Hercules is almost 11 feet long and stands about 4 feet high.